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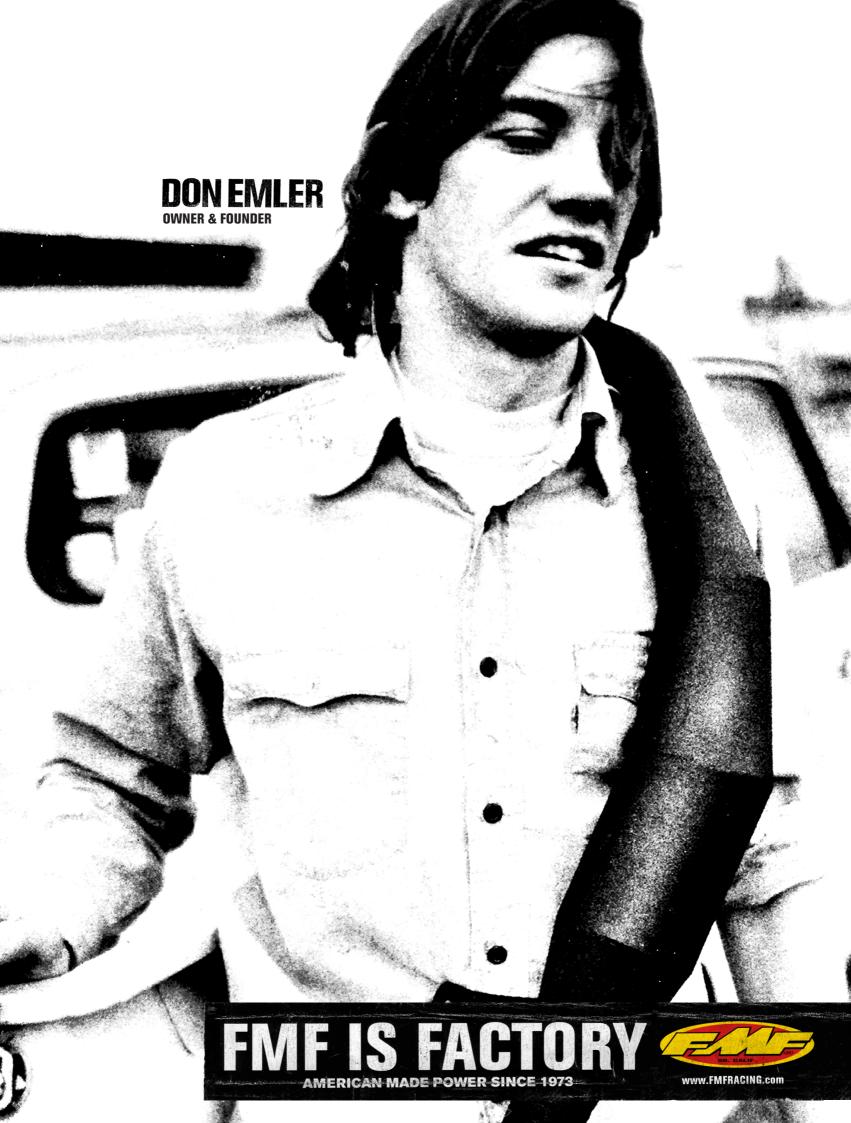


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FIM WORLD MOTOCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

STORY BY GEOFF MEYER

The opening nine rounds of the FIM motocross world championship bring an amazing amount of diversity and exotic destinations. There is no doubt the 2015 season will see many surprises as the best motocross riders in the world go head to head for the crown presently owned by Antonio Cairoli. Check out the first nine rounds of this magnificent series.



Grand Prix of Qatar - Losail

Starting at the Losail Motocross Track

on the outskirts of Doha, Qatar the riders will be able to cruise into the season, as this circuit is rather easy and doesn't hide any real surprises. The night time air and flood lights do make this an interesting nights racing and in many people's eyes AMA Supercross champion Ryan Villopoto will feel right at home. The facility itself is without question the best facility in world motocross and that brings a really cool feel to the first round. Doha itself is growing at an alarming rate as it prepares for the 2022 Football World Cup. Grand Prix of Thailand - Nakhonchaisri The next round in will be run at the circuit simply known as Thailand Circuit, at the village of Nakhonchaisri, just one hour outside Bangkok. Held at an older road racing facility we won't see too much elevation, unlike the last two years in Thailand, but will have some interesting aspects. I don't see too many surprises for the riders as far as the track goes, but racing in Thailand will always present interesting culture changes for all the riders. Even brushing your teeth with tap water could send you to the hospital. Of course with Bangkok just 40 minutes away it's the perfect chance for any fan thinking about mixing a holiday with a Grand Prix. Thailand is also very cheap, making it a really exciting and inexpensive place to visit.

Grand Prix of Argentina - Patagonia

The third round in Argentina will be held at the Patagonia race track, this facility is currently under construction and all sounds good for a really nice natural terrain circuit. Build in what used to be a forrest area, with hillsides and a volcanic dirt base the ground and area should make for good racing.

A lot of lines and a chance for riders like Cairoli, Villopoto and Paulin to test their skills. Argentina is a little of the unknown for Europeans, and Americans, but what a magnificent place to visit.

MXGP of Trentino

The crossodrome circuit in Trento, Italy. Rockhard, slippery and dangerous for anyone pushing too hard. The GP guys will have a big advantage over Villopoto here and despite his Supercross skills on slippery circuits, he might get caught out if he leads early and tries to push too hard. It's one of the most beautiful settings in the year with huge snow covered mountains in the distance. A really beautiful part of Europe. A difficult one to get to as most airports are anything to 100 kilometers away. It isn't a circuit Antonio Cairoli likes.

MXGP of Europe

Many peoples favourites, just as Lierop was. The Dutch know how to run a Grand Prix and with all it's history, and usually a large crowd the Valkenswaard circuit gives everything a motocross fan would want. The eurocircuit is over course sand, but not deep sand, so it will probably give everyone an even base to work on. French, British, Italian, American or Belgians all ride well now at this circuit. It's also a cool GP as the city of Eindhoven is just up the road and it's a brilliant place for night-life, while the Eindhoven airport is just 20 kilometers away. Antonio Cairoli has often has success here as has of course local boy Jeffrey Herlings.

MXGP of Spain

The Carlos Martínez Zorita circuit (or Talavera de la Reina) is one of great memories for British fans. Who can forget back in the late 1990's when Gordon Crockard won his first ever GP here. The circuit hasn't been used in many years and last year hosted the GP. Hard-pack



and with a lot of elevation it's a beautiful circuit, and one that struggles at times with dust due to the hot Spanish temperatures and lack of rain in the area. 130 kilometers from Madrid makes it a hard one to get to. For Cairoli and Villopoto it's probably an even battle ground.

In what is in my opinion the best run of circuits in this year's MXGP series starts at Matterley Basin in England, followed by Villars sous Ecot in France and finally Maggiora in Italy. For me personally these races all hold some emotional value.

It was at the Villars sous Ecot circuit in 1988 that I made my first ever (European) held Motocross des Nations. A year early I visited Unadilla for the MXdN in America, but it was that 1986 MXdN at Maggiora that got my juices flowing to visit Europe and this magic event. Enough about my memories, let us look at these three magnificent facilities.

Grand Prix of Great Britain

Matterley Basin in the south of England is just a baby compared to the Italian and French venues, but it holds the same distinction of running the biggest motocross race in the world (MXoN). That 2006 team event saw this circuit get its first real taste of big crowds as the whole world watched Stefan Everts dominate the world around what was a really beautifully prepared circuit. Matterley is







crowd friendly and always presents good close racing. Who doesn't love England for their pubs and friendly folk. A must for any MX fan. The circuit is also just up the road from where motocross began at Camberley, Surrey in 1924.

Grand Prix of France

If Matterley is known for its valley, then Villars sous Ecot is known for his up and down hills and that 1988 MXdN. Typically French this circuit is as picturesque as it is dangerous. Crowd attendance will be massive for this year's event as it's close to the Italian, German and Swizz border. Watching Cairoli, Paulin and Villopoto going at it on this circuit will be worth a month's wages.

Grand Prix of Italy

How big is the crowd going to be for this event in 2015? My guess is the roads to Maggiora will be crowded as the motocross world visit what is one of the most tradition circuits in the sport. I just love this race and the atmosphere doesn't get much better as the Italians give their hero (Cairoli) the welcome he deserves. Rock hard, and slippery, Maggiora is as Italian as motocross gets and like the previous round in France is everything you would expect from this country. Not a circuit Cairoli likes, but he will fight as hard as possible to give his public a victory. A really beautiful area of Italy and great little cafes to get a meal or drink.





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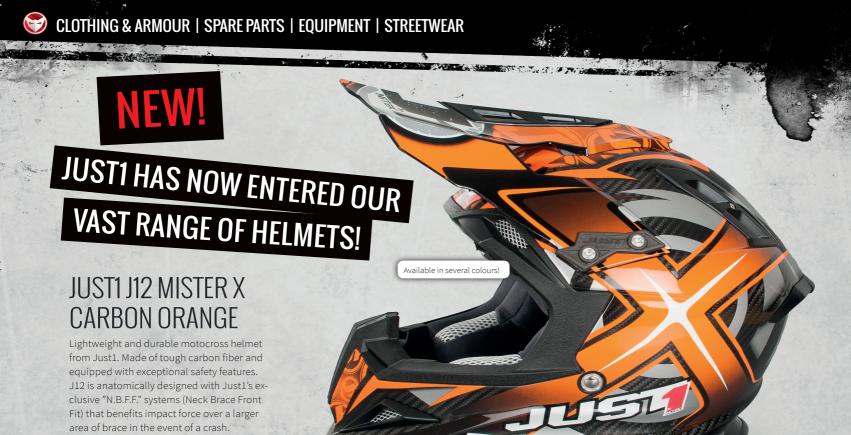
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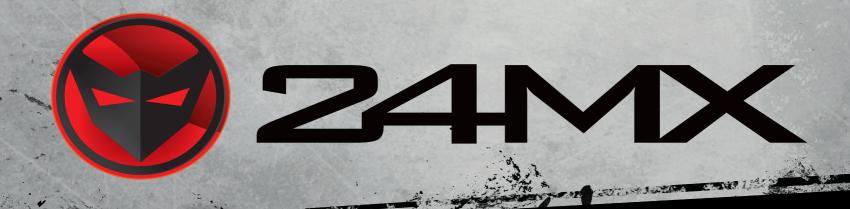


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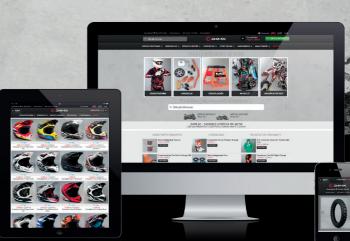
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STEFAN EVERTS CRIB

STORY BY FREESTYLEXTREME

Stefan Everts is a ten-time World Motocross Champion and un disputed racing legend. We were recently privileged enough be taken on a full tour of the Everts family property in Belgium to see first-hand the full extent of this man's success.

Son of four-time World Motocross
Champion Harry Everts, Stefan's racing career started from a young age. Stefan rode his first World Championship at the tender age of 17, and won his last World Championship in 2006. During this period he would (amongst countless other achievements) become the only rider ever to win a Motocross World Championship on all four Japanese bike manufacturers – a feat he is particularly proud of. Nowadays Everts acts as the team manager and director of rider development for the mighty Red Bull KTM factory team in Europe.

When we rolled up at Stefan's house we honestly had no idea what to expect. Would there be huge locked gates? Guard dogs? A tabletop to drive over? None of the above. The first thing to really take my attention when we arrived at the property was the smiles and handshakes of the Everts family, who greeted us with open arms.

After a beer and a chat our tour began.
We've picked out our best shots from
our time with the Everts family so you
guys can have a close-up look at what

the inside of one of the most successful MX riders of all time's pad looks like - prepare to be jealous!
Stefan on his Yamaha collection: "At least two of these Yamaha's are prototypes, not for production - you'd never see them in America. I think they were actually some of the last prototype bikes to be raced so they are pretty special to me."

The basement is home to Stefan's trophy room:

"People always ask me 'How many trophies do you have?' I say 'I don't know' – we never counted... we always lost count."

Mounted on the beams of the barn are four World Championship winning motocross bikes - each from one of the four main Japanese manufacturers - a collection no-one else can match.

It's not every-day you see a piece of vintage motocross history mounted behind the bar!

"Most of the paint jobs on my helmets mean something to me – they all have a story to tell." Stefan







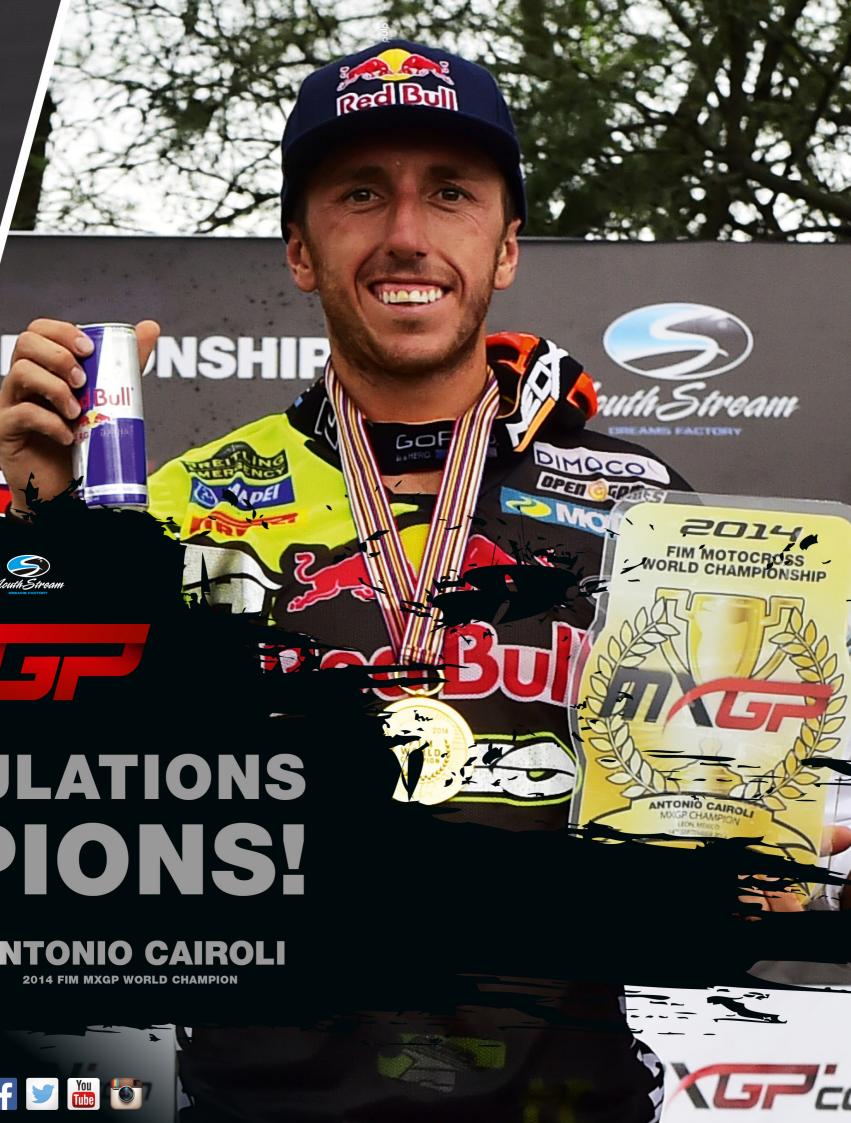














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KEN ROCZEN

Many years ago all the experts in the world of motocross said that German rider Ken Roczen would be the next big thing, and with an FIM 250 title and AMA 450 title to his name and the red plate in the 2015 AMA Supercross series it's little surprise that all eyes are on Roczen as the AMA Supercross series moves into the fourth round.

Roczen who moved from the Red Bull KTM Factory team this year and now rides for Suzuki has shown his speed has remained. While Roczen has had most of his success with KTM the move back to Suzuki has started well in 2015.

Motocross Illustrated: How does it feel to be back on Suzuki?

Roczen: I am glad to be with the Suzuki team, coming back to Suzuki means a lot to me as it was always a good experience riding for them in the past, back in Europe, and it's amazing to be with them now in America. I have a lot of faith in the guys and the bike and I can't wait for the relationship to move into the next phase.

Motocross Illustrated: The opening round of the AMA Supercross series at the Anaheim Stadium proved a big success as you won the main event.

Roczen: It felt good to get the first one out of the way. I got a good start and did some good laps. The track was tricky and I didn't want to crash, so I kept it steady. I felt good, last year I was a rookie and it always feels good to get a victory and for the team is was great, their first one. I have good condition and we have a good track where we are working and the whole team did a good job in Anaheim I. Motocross Illustrated: The









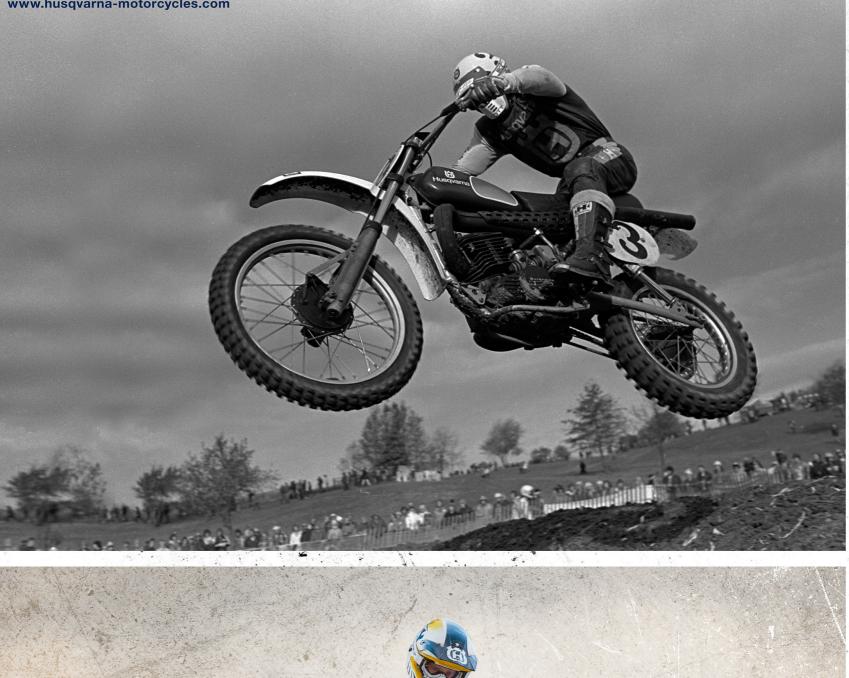
next round in Pheonix might not have seen a victory, but a podium finish and more solid points and I am guessing was what you were hoping for?

Roczen: Pheonix was good.

I mean it felt great I had a good start and had a good battle with Eli (Tomac) and he beat me straight up, so well done for him. I will take a podium any day and it was a good consistent night. Big whoops in Pheonix that's for sure so I was glad to come out ok.

Motocross Illustrated: In round three last weekend you once again found the top step of the podium with a solid victory. Now three rounds in his hold on the red plate is very much what you expected?

Roczen: Ryan (Dungey) was right behind me and made it a tough race. I will take any points I can get and it was great to come away with another win. Ryan is always consistent and Eli is always fast, he rode another solid race, so it's going to be a tough season. The track was great and it made for good racing. I was so happy for Tickle, we had a solid weekend, what more could you ask."





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QATAR GRAND PRIX

STORY GEOFF MEYER IMAGES RAY ARCHER AND SIMON CUDBY

As 2015 slowly bloomed, and fireworks were going off around the world, and people celebrated a new year arriving, two men were working hard on their craft, preparing for what might be their toughest challenge. Two careers defined by huge success, money and living standards many of us can only dream of.

Italian Antonio Cairoli and American Ryan Villopoto are two rivals who had have hardly even locked handlebars in competition, two competitors with the same drive to win, and capture what they both feel is theirs. When the 2015 FIM motocross world championship bursts into action on February 28 the eyes of the motocross world will be set on on a road racing facility just outside Doha, Qatar.

Along with names like Clement Desalle, Gautier Paulin, Jeremy Van Horebeek and many others the 2015 MXGP title will be the most competitive and adored championship in the sports history.

While the harsh winter of Europe has sent several GP riders to America to train, eight times world motocross champion Antonio Cairoli though remains in his beloved Italy. His pattern for success won't change just because of the arrival of the best American rider from the last decade. The Sicilian,

who prides himself on being prepared better than anyone else will continue to work away with the people close to him, his two Red Bull KTM Factory team-mates Ken De Dycker and Tommy Searle. His season begins in a few weeks at the Riola Sardo circuit in Sardinia. A million miles away from the plush training facilities were Villopoto will be preparing in California, America. Ryan Villopoto a nine time AMA champion and the only rider in America who seemingly has a serious chance of beating Cairoli for a world title is also very particular about how he trains. His career has been defined on moments of error or dazzling speed and success. If Villopoto doesn't end the season with a broken bone, then he is going to be crowned champion, and he's even ended seasons with injury and still be crowned champion. Along with riders like Ricky Carmichael, Bob Hannah, Ricky Johnson, Broc Glover he is the man of his era, a level above everybody else and his place among the AMA legends is secure, no matter what happens in 2015.

Due to their massive success, both riders are admitted to an exclusive club, not just champions, but legends, men who's histories were written on the back of destruction of their competition.

On what will be a warm night at the Losail circuit on the outskirts of Doha, the first chapter of the 2015 season will be written. Nobody can know who's name will be added to those of Clement Desalle and Gautier Paulin, the GP of Qatar winners in 2013 and 2014, but what is known is that victor will take a serious advantage into the second and third rounds in Thailand and Argentina.

Bring it on!!!!











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